



United States Mission to the OSCE

Session 3: Trafficking in Persons

As delivered by Dorothy Douglas Taft
to the OSCE Human Dimension Implementation Meeting
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Ms. Moderator,

In light of the presentations made at the beginning of this session, I want to clearly reiterate the U.S. commitment to the eradication of human trafficking, including labor trafficking, both domestically and abroad. All trafficking is a crime that is an affront to human dignity. As it is one of the contributors to the phenomenon of trafficking, the U.S. opposes prostitution and any related activities, including pimping, pandering and/or maintaining brothels. These activities are inherently harmful and dehumanizing.

Last year at the Ljubljana Ministerial, OSCE participating States agreed on measures to ensure the highest standards of conduct and accountability of persons serving on international forces and missions. This issue is of particular concern to the United States. It is reprehensible that persons with the responsibility to protect civilians in a destabilized region or to promote the rule of law would encourage human trafficking or sexual exploitation of the very population they were sent to protect. Such behavior by persons serving on peacekeeping missions weakens the rule of law, strengthens criminal networks, and undermines the mission's own purpose. The vast majority of peacekeepers are honorable men and women performing vital tasks under difficult circumstances. However, the completely unacceptable misdeeds of the few tarnish the reputation of the whole.

Significantly, OSCE countries have pledged to step up efforts to prevent military and civilian personnel deployed abroad from engaging in trafficking in human beings or in exploiting victims of trafficking. Countries with deployed military and civilian personnel also have, in an effort to combat trafficking, pledged to work cooperatively with authorities in countries hosting such missions. In the United States, we have specifically bolstered our efforts to train our military personnel at all levels how to recognize and counter trafficking in human beings.

Since 2004 the U.S. Department of Defense has taken an aggressive approach against trafficking. The Defense Department has instituted an awareness training program for all military, civilians, and civilian contractors being deployed or serving overseas. The awareness training is the core of a demand-reduction program that includes specifically tailored programs managed by overseas commands. The Defense Acquisition Regulation has been supplemented with a rule to ensure contractors supporting U.S. Forces overseas comply with the U.S. "Zero Tolerance" policy on trafficking. The Military Extraterritorial Jurisdiction Act extends the "Zero Tolerance" policy to all civilians and contract civilians working for the Defense Department overseas; and last Fall an Executive Order added a specific charge to the Uniform Code of Military Justice for "patronizing a prostitute." The Department's Inspector General developed a Trafficking in Persons evaluation plan and began to conduct its first evaluation one year ago. The evaluation is designed to assess

whether current Defense Department efforts are sufficient, as one component of the larger U.S. Government effort, to successfully combat trafficking in persons.

We would also like to see the OSCE give more attention to the potential relationship between large sporting events or other large conventions and the crime of human trafficking. As has been mentioned already, the World Cup in Germany drew significant attention to this danger. We need to do more. Law enforcement officials in the U.S. have found that large sporting events have often drawn organized sex rings. However, awareness-raising campaigns and stepped up involvement by law enforcement does help address the issue.

Finally, ladies and gentlemen, the United States is pleased to be working with Belgium and France to introduce a decision for the Brussels Ministerial to combat sexual exploitation of children. The decision will focus on ways to combat child pornography on the Internet, including by strengthening national legislation and cooperation among law enforcement agencies across the OSCE region. The initiative also focuses on ways to combat child sex tourism, including by promoting a code of conduct for the tourism industry and addressing demand. We urge all OSCE participating States to support this initiative.